



PHOTOGRAPHY/ RICK GLEASON

The new four-acre park will be at left, between the highway and the river. Work on it will begin this spring.

Accord paves way for park at mouth of Provo Canyon

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By Michael Morris
Deseret News staff writer

PROVO — Motorists planning a drive up Provo Canyon will be greeted soon at the canyon's mouth by more than just gravel and road construction.

The Utah County Commission on Wednesday approved an agreement with the Utah Department of Transportation that paves way for construction of a four-acre Provo Canyon Demonstration Park near Murdock Dam.

Work on the park's irrigation system will begin this summer, with planting of vegetation planned for this fall and the following spring, county Travel Council Director Jim Young said.

The park, a brainchild of the Provo Canyon Parkway Committee, will be a small experimental revegetation project serving as a gateway to Provo Canyon. The park will tie into a parkway planned through the canyon and will feature nature trails and indigenous vegetation but no picnic tables.

An information kiosk on tourist attractions in the canyon and county also will be installed at the park site.

The park will be built on Provo city land and will cost, according to landscape architects CRSS Sirrine, about \$1.6 million.

UDOT has prepared plans, specifications and final cost estimates, and officials said the project is almost ready to be let out to bid.

"This one (park) is just a stopping point" to introduce motorists to the canyon and its attractions, Young said. He said the park will

New park

Location: Mouth of Provo Canyon, near Murdock Dam.

Cost: \$1.6 million.

Will have: Nature trail, revegetation project, tourist information kiosk.

Won't have: picnic tables.

feature vegetation typical of the plants and trees to be planted along U.S. 189 as part of highway expansion mitigation plans.

According to the agreement, the county will be responsible for park service and maintenance. In addition, the county will be required to "get UDOT's approval before making any changes in the view area facilities, should they desire to make any such changes."

County Engineer Clyde Naylor said park service and maintenance will cost the county about \$2,000 annually. Costs would be less if the county contracts for the service through local Job Training Partnership Act offices, he said.

"Our liability would be minimal on that (park)," said Deputy County Attorney Michael Mack in answer to commissioners' concerns about possible litigation stemming from park use.

The county already owns and runs two county parks in Provo Canyon — Vivian and Nunn's — and runs two others owned by Provo City — Upper Falls and Canyon Glen.